

A
L E T T E R
TO THE
DUTCH MERCHANTS
IN
E N G L A N D.



L O N D O N:

Printed for M. COOPER, in Pater-noster-Row.
MDCCLIX.

[Price Sixpence.]

[Faint, illegible handwriting on aged paper]

PPJC

GENTLEMEN.

A GREAT deal of Respect is certainly due to your Characters, as to Men of Property, and of Honour; in which Light I venture to address myself to your Attentions with the utmost Veneration, but with that Freedom which becomes an Advocate for the Honour of his Country.

The Relation which you bear to this Kingdom, many of you having been long resident in it, or being naturalized Subjects, or Natives of it, besides the Interest which you have in its Liberty and Preservation, from the necessary Connections of your Families, Friendships, and Fortunes, are so many Inducements for me to wish, that there never may be Occasion for any malevolent Insinuations with regard to your Conduct.

I can never be persuaded to believe that you are, or have been in any ways instrumental to what must endanger that Liberty, or make that Property uncertain.

B

I.

Is it to be credited that your Industry has ever served to promote those Clamours both at Home and Abroad, which tend to create Enmity between two Nations, whose real and substantial Interests have long been united ; and so closely united, that the rending them asunder would prove a Separation destructive most certainly to the very Existence of one of the Governments so united, and ruinous to both ? Nor can the Imagination of your greatest Enemies have supposed that any of you, tho' only resident in this Country, (I say nothing of its native Subjects) have been concerned in a contraband and hostile Traffic. It is treasonable in Subjects, and unjustifiable in Friends.

But at the same time that no Doubt is to be made, that you have never ceased to preserve the true Characters of Merchants, and good Hollanders, yet you cannot but be sensible that in the present War, Great-Britain is under an unhappy Necessity of contending not only with the Violence of its Enemies, but with the Collusions of its Allies.

The Wealth and Commerce of this Nation is become too dazzling not to be seen by some of the Maritime Powers with Malevolence, the natural Effect of a blind Self-Interest.

Notwithstanding that the immense Influence, the excessive Ambition, and the unnatural Combinations of France, who has possessed

ferred herself, as a Deposit, of the whole Austrian Dominions on this Side of the Rhine, and even of Capital Cities in the Heart of the Empire, notwithstanding that such Circumstances ought at this Time not less than at any former Period, to be alarming to her Neighbours, yet, it may be judged from a Behaviour never to be forgotten, from the captious Resentment* expressed when the Army of the Allies did but just border upon the Territories of a certain State, from the Readiness with which the Convoys of the Enemy when marching to invade were permitted to pass near Fortresses of the highest Importance, it may be, it must be clearly seen, from all these Circumstances, how narrow have been the Politics of those Neutral Neighbours; Politics that extend no farther than the immediate Advantage which they hope to reap from the present unhappy Situation of the Affairs of Europe.

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With

* See the Letter of Prince Ferdinand of Brunswic, June 24, 1758, to her Royal Highness the late Princess Governante, in Answer to the Representations of the States of Betuwe and of the Quarter of Zutphen, which obliged him to remove, as high up as Rees, the Bridge which was flung over at Bimmen, and which was absolutely necessary for the Communication of all the Troops which were posted on the Right Side of the Rhine, and whose Passage was greatly retarded upon this Account; although the Entrance of it was from the Bylandse-Grind belonging to the King of Prussia, and the other End of it only touched upon about a Hundred Paces of the Province of Gueldres, but where there were no Pillars to mark, or Persons present to point out the precise Limits of the Dutch Territory. Utrecht Gazette, June 27, 1758.

With Regard to France, she has been but too successful in improving these Dispositions; her affected Moderation has removed their Fears, and her Concessions have allured their Avarice. She has exaggerated the Conduct of this Nation with the odious Colours of a piratical State. She has represented it as grasping at the only true and universal Empire, a universal and exclusive Commerce. She has given extraordinary Privileges to particular Subjects of our Allies, in opening to them a free Access to her Colonies, by a * Suspension of her fundamental Laws; and has granted them a Bounty † upon that very Article of Commerce which has lately become an Object of Emulation between us and them. In short, she has neglected no one Spring which she is capable of moving, to turn every other commercial Power against us,

* In the Passes or Licences granted to Dutch Ships going to the French Islands in America, is inserted a Clause in regard to certain Duties which are to be paid; and as a Proof of the Truth that Dutch Ships without such Licences would be good Prizes when taken by the French Cruizers, the French Commissions of War run in this manner, authorizing "to cruize on the Ships, Barks, and other Vessels, as well French as Foreign, carrying on a Foreign and prohibited Trade to the French Islands in America; to subdue them by Force of Arms, to take and carry them to the Island the nearest to the Place where the Prize shall have been made, &c."

† September 4, 1758, Count D'Affry the French Minister acquainted the States General, that his Master was pleased to grant a Bounty to Dutch Subjects importing Herrings into his Dominions, and that the 9th Article of the Treaty of Commerce of the 21st of December, 1739, should be executed provisionally.

us, and to avail herself of their Assistance, either openly or collusively, without which she must soon find herself without Resource.

In Consequence of this Policy, every Attempt to impede these Collusions has been productive of the loudest Complaints, and even of Threatenings, yet at the same Time a pusillanimous Complaisance on the Part of this Nation would but add to the Number of repeated Complaints, and subject it to the Impertinence, and even Insults of the most insignificant Governments.

Whatever have been the flattering Expectations which the Ministers of any Foreign States may have formed, that the Counsels of Great Britain are directed by a timid Policy, yet they will do well to consider, that such a Policy under the present Circumstances, is as little of a Colour with the Temper of this Nation, as with the Genius of its Ministers, or of its great Ally.

It is not therefore to be doubted, but that Great-Britain will proceed with the same Resolution and Courage to controul her collusive Friends, as to attack her avowed Enemies; and in the mean time she is ready to justify her Conduct both to the one and the other, upon the most equitable Principles. Her Conduct appears to have been fully justified by the solid Answers of her Ministers, both at Home and Abroad.

After

After so many minute Discussions, Gentlemen, you have too much Penetration, not to have been entirely convinced long ago, that the Cause of the Dutch Nation is totally distinct from the Case of a few, who are, or who pretend to be, its Subjects.

The Rights of an Ally, and of all true Hollanders, are as sacred to every true Englishman, as his own Liberty. Nor can any Union be more cordial than that, which, when rightly understood, appears to be established upon Fundamental Interests.

Every Subject of Holland, that acts as a real Dutchman, will most certainly be treated as such, but the Dutchman who puts upon himself a borrowed Character, has little Reason to complain, if he is treated like what he appears to be, the Deserter of his own Country, and the Enemy of its Ally.

Such Attachments have no other Principle than that of an unbounded Avarice; a Principle capable of breaking the tenderest and firmest Ties of every Duty, in every Relation. Subjects so disposed are suspicious to every Government under which they live, and whose Protection they can little deserve, since these Dispositions cannot fail to prompt every Means of increasing the Wealth of private Persons, however repugnant those Means may be to the fundamental Interests and Alliances of their Country, and to the most sacred Laws of Neutrality and Justice.

But

But such Dispositions defeat even their own End; for, as their Object necessarily makes the Cause of such Persons a *Common Cause* with the weakest of the Powers at War, the Means pursued by them can only serve to promote a Rupture of their own Government with the strongest Party; which would be a Conduct opposite to all the Rules of that experienced Policy, which has long been the Preservation of Republics and lesser States.

But in regard to the present Case, how extremely inconsistent with Prudence, on the Part of Holland, would be a Rupture with Great-Britain? Whether we consider the Privilege contended for by the Dutch Traders either in Europe or America? Let it be asked these False-Patriots, so clamorous for the insulted Trade and Commerce of their Country, would they betray to a blind and impotent Spirit of Revenge, their own more essential private Interests, and that of the maritime Provinces of Holland? The fatal Consequences that must flow from it to all the inland Provinces, are but too obvious. If the Dutch States should be obliged, by importunate Clamours, to enter into a War with England, do the Subjects of Holland, who are concerned to maintain this lucrative Traffic with the Enemy, intend to destroy, by the Means they would use to preserve it, the very Existence of the
Privilege

Privilege which is contended for, in every Extent?

But with regard to Indulgencies and Concessions, they surely can never be hoped for, till a more decent Conduct on the Part of Dutch Traders, and an Alteration of unfriendly Measures on the Part of the Dutch Government, shall restore that Confidence which cannot subsist under the present Circumstances.

Your Correspondents, Gentlemen, will do well to take the Advice, of which I make no doubt but that your Prudence has suggested it to them: They will do well to reflect, how inconsistent their Conduct has been with these essential Views, which regard not less the Permanency than the Extension of Commerce. It is a disagreeable Truth; they may become too soon unhappily convinced, how much they have urged the Contest to an Extremity, from which they will not easily recede. The Object of it was a private one; and they have made it a National. Not contented to enjoy a very important Privilege, in its natural Latitude, with Moderation; to taste the Sweets of Commerce and Tranquillity, and all those silent Benefits, which increase naturally of themselves, in proportion as the neighbouring States are involved in all the Miseries of War; thus incapable of knowing their own Happiness or Duty, does it become a few
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Merchants of Holland, to engage the vast Majority of that industrious and peaceable People in a most destructive War, against their antient Ally? A War, as unnatural as ever was excited by the civil Dissentions of antient Rome, to shed the Blood of fraternal Armies?

I speak with Warmth for the whole People of Holland. They deserve Redress. And is it not an Injury that demands it, that a few Men should dare to embarrass the general Commerce of a whole Nation with the most disagreeable Perplexities, merely upon their Account? Must these Injuries be aggravated too, by Dangers increasing on every Side, and accumulated by the blind and obstinate Conduct of an avaritious and contemptible Minority?

The reformed Religion must tremble at the Consequences. Can it be conceived, that from so despicable a Source, as a single Mercantile House, in one of the maritime Cities of Holland, already seems destined to be poured with Profusion, the Blood of two Nations, who, for near two Hundred Years, have almost constantly fought under the same Banners, in Defence of the same Principles, of civil and religious Liberty? So dreadful are the Effects of Avarice, and so narrow are the Views of a temporary and misguided Policy!

The able, and very respectable Persons, who are entrusted with the Administration of such important, and national Interests, in Holland, can never see such Attempts to embroil the State, without shewing their Resentment to the Authors of them, for their own Justification: Nor will surely the body of Merchants, who are more considerable in Rank, in Property, and in Number, permit their fair and legal Commerce to be disturbed any longer, merely upon account of the Presumptions which are too strongly occasioned by that Trade, which is notoriously illegal and collusive.

The Traders and Proprietors of the Surinam Colonies, cannot look with Indifference upon the Trade of the French Islands as it is now carried on. The Colonies of the Dutch Subjects in America, which are really fertile in themselves, and capable of still greater Advantages, suffer a sensible Decay; every Improvement must be neglected, and the Products of them proportionably sink in their Value; while the Products of French Islands conveyed thro' the Medium of the barren Islands of St. Eustatius and Curassao, continue to glut the Markets of Amsterdam, and of the other maritime Cities of Holland.

Above all, the People of the united and defenceless States, will call aloud upon those whose shameful Counsels have long left them defenceless; but more especially must their
Terrors

Terrors be alarmed, when they see their naked Frontiers surrounded with all the merciless Depredations of an increasing War.

Let them but cast an Eye upon the desolated Empire, and the formidable Vicinity of the destroying Armies. Their Houses, their Parents, their Wives, their Children, their Properties, Liberties, and Religion are all Ideas which must present themselves to their Reflection, and make them detest that Avarice which would deprive them of their ancient, and almost sole Defender, and betray them into the insidious Protection of an Enemy who never foregoes, altho' he has often seemed to forget, the System of Destruction.

In the present Contest, which Great-Britain sees with Concern more for her Friends, than for herself; she asks no Gratitude from Holland, she only asks Impartiality. She is ready to forget a long Series of Benefits and Indulgencies, the recent Sacrifices of her own immediate Interests, and that the Republic owes its Liberties, and even its Existence to its Connections with England. A truly neutral and disinterested Conduct would be esteemed a sufficient Return.

The Minister of France has dared to tell the Republic that the Cause of his Master and of the United States is a common Cause. But is it possible that it should be true? are their High Mightinesses to be dictated to, and

instructed in their Interests in a manner so derogating from their national Dignity as Sovereign Powers, and from their good Faith as Allies, by the most solemn and sacred Treaties?

Should the Republic become ever so blind to the lasting and more extensive Interests of its Subjects as to unite itself in a still closer Union with the Enemy of Great-Britain, it must fall a Victim to its false and narrow Policy; since in its present State it is too weak not to become a Province in effect to *France*, and tho' * combined with that ambitious Power, it could not long be supported by it.

Its

* Altho' the general Situation of Things in Europe makes some little Difference in regard to the Truth of political Reflections when applied to former or present Times; yet the Consequences of the Dutch States flinging themselves entirely into the Arms and Protection of France at any time, are extremely well pointed out, in regard to both Nations, by the Duke de Sully, who was so sensible of the Inconveniences that would result from it even to France itself, that he used his utmost Efforts to persuade his Master against undertaking the Interests of Holland as his own, and accepting their Subjects as his Dependents, for fear of giving Umbrage to the House of Austria, and drawing the Resentments of Spain united with England, against them both; which could not be safely ventured upon unless France was superior by Sea; a Point which she was not, by any means arrived at; and as to the Dutch States, he says they were weak to the last Degree, and embroiled with such Divisions among themselves as must render them very impotent and uncertain Friends, and draw upon France already exhausted two very powerful and certain Enemies, even without doing Holland any Service, but that such a Union of France and Holland would only serve to retard a general Peace for a few Years.—Memoires de Sully, L. 23, p. 315, to p. 319. Edit. 8vo. London.

Its artificial Government is a very complicated Machine, whose Springs have been rendered feeble by Time, without a Power of renewing themselves; and it is almost impossible for Holland in its present State to join with France in a declared Opposition to England, but the Consequence may very soon appear, in producing a new Form of Government.

The Result of so fundamental a Change in a Country long supported merely by the excessive Industry, and Equality of all its Members, would be the returning into its original Condition.

Whenever that Event shall be, England, France, and the Protestant Powers will divide among themselves its Wealth, its Trade, and even the Number of its Inhabitants; and it is very easy to judge which Country would share the largest Part, when we reflect upon the present Connections of the Subjects of Holland in point of Property.

The Republic which hastily grew up to its Maturity, may with equal Rapidity be precipitating towards its Destruction; and the Times are perhaps approaching when the Ocean will recover that Empire, which the Arts of Industry, of Frugality, and of public Virtue once wrested from him.

The Republic therefore would do well to consider in the present unhappy Situation of Europe, which Alternative is most eligible,

whether Peace with all Parties, together with the Privilege of such a Trade with the Enemy of her Ally during the War between them, as that which she enjoyed before the Contest, if it is possible that Great-Britain can be persuaded to grant it in any Degree after so manifest a Breach and Voidance of Contracts on the Part of Holland; or whether the Republic will accept the destructive Offers, advantageous as they may appear to be for a Moment, made by the Enemy of her most antient Ally, by the antient and secret Enemy of the Republic, to whose never-ceasing Ambition, and destructive Politics the Miseries of all Europe are now to be, as they have often been, attributed; and, in which the Republic will be too happy not to be involved. The Republic is to determine, whether she will act with good Faith towards her Friends, or whether, on the other hand she will encourage the Frauds, abet and assist the Cause of their Enemies, contrary to express Stipulations.

If the latter is the Choice, let her stand to the Consequences, an Example to the World, how little and how narrow are the Views of every Nation, where the Principles of Trade become the only Principles of Government; and how miserable may that People become, among whom the Interest of a few Particulars is represented as the Interests of the Community, and the vast, and complicated

plicated System of national Felicity is seen only in one View.

But to descend, Gentlemen, from these Reflections, which, however important they may be thought to be for the People of Holland, may not have the same Weight upon the Sentiments of some of its Subjects. Let us then come closer to the Point, and consider this Subject under a more personal View.

You will, I hope, pardon the Observation. Merchants are bad Counsellors in Matters of Politics, where the general Welfare is the Question. Nor are all Persons who bear the Name of Merchants strictly such. The Commutation of the Products of different Countries is often the least, and frequently not at all their Concern; much less therefore are these Persons to be heard upon such important Subjects relative to Commerce as require the most extensive Reflection, and disinterested Views.

With regard even to those who are really Merchants, however amiable they are in uniting the Bonds of universal Society, notwithstanding the Separation of Countries, Climates, Manners, Religions and Governments, however useful they are in softening the natural Wants and Miseries of Mankind, or in controuling the fatal Consequences that flow from the Ambition of Princes, and in extending over the World the Connections of Humanity, yet as they form a kind of
separate

separate Republic of themselves, independent of the several Governments under which they live, their Connections in one Relation often jar with their Duties in another, since they make a Link of that Chain in which the Enemies of their Country are not less united.

With regard to Commerce itself, considered as a general and complicated System, they are partial Judges of it, from a View only of that particular mercantile Part in which they have been nursed.

The British Nation that owes so much to her Merchants, has suffered from her Merchants, whenever they have departed from their natural Province.

Should a single factious mercantile English House in Amsterdam involve all the Dutch Provinces in a most ruinous War, it will not be the first War that has been occasioned or fomented by a few Merchants upon other Views than those which are the Basis upon which the Counsels of an able Minister are, and ought to be founded, for the Honour and Preservation of his Country.

None enter more readily into Wars than Merchants, none are sooner weary of the Expences of it, or *astonished* at its Dangers.

If it is true that the united Clamours, and Resentments of some Merchants and Negotiators in Holland, and elsewhere have gone so far as to have occasioned a very solemn Debate

bate in the Councils of Holland, before the Reduction of Louisburgh was known, “ whether War should be immediately declared against England or not ? ” they have certainly urged the Point to a very injudicious Extremity.

Can it easily be believed that the Wisdom of their High Mightinesses is capable of being imposed upon by illfounded and insolent Clamours, so far as to precipitate themselves and their Subjects into a most dreadful and distressing War, for a Trade in which at Bottom their Subjects are little more concerned than as mere Carriers, Insurers, or Agents ?

It is notorious, and the Dutch Agents have confessed it, that, excepting the Interest which Dutch Subjects have in the Captured Cargoes, in common with all other Insurers of other Countries, the actual Property of Dutch Subjects amounts to nothing more than the Value of their outward and homeward bound Freight, invested in French Product ; an Object that bears a very small Proportion indeed to the whole Cargoes, which are generally very large, in Return for the great Quantity of Provisions and Necessaries shipped on board of Dutch Ships *

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* That this Fact, may not be contraverted, these are the Words of the Author of the Memorial, or Exposition of the Case

from British Ports, and consigned by British Subjects to their Agents at the Dutch Islands, which are delivered there, either into French Barks coming into the Harbour, or landed upon the Shore ; till such time as the Barks can return again from the French Islands to fetch them. The Return is made in the same manner of Coffee, Sugars, Indigo, and other Commodities, the Growth of the French Islands, and which are well known, never to have been the Growth of the barren Soil of those Islands which are inhabited by Dutch Subjects ; the Object of whose Commerce, till the present temporary Suspension of the Laws of France in favour of particular licensed Dutch Subjects, has always been an Illicit one with the Colonies of every other Nation, to the Prejudice of the Mother Country ; and which must as justly deserve the Attention, and attract the Jealousy of Spain, and even of France itself, in Times of Peace, no less than it now demands the Resentment of Great-Britain.

The Return is made under the Colour of Dutch Names, and consigned to Persons residing in the Ports of Holland ; but upon
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Case of the Dutch Ships : Printed at Amsterdam, p. 11. Fol. edit.

Si le manque de ces provisions pouvoit entrâner la ruine des Isles François, le Gouvernement Anglois empêcheroit sans doute que les Anglois eux memes n'y fournissent des Provisions, comme ils l'ont fait encore en dernier lieu a divers endroits de l'Isle de St. Domingue, au moyen de chargemens de Vaisseaux Hollandois.

the real Account of the first Laders, the British Subjects in England and Ireland, in proportion to the Value of the first Cargo sent out by them, and the rest, and far greatest Part of the Cargo which is generally treble to the Value of the outward bound Cargo, is upon Account of Frenchmen. And if Hamburghers, Bremeners, Danes, Swedes, Lubeckers, Spaniards, and the Merchants of all the trading Countries in Europe, connected with the Dutch or French Traders, are supposed to have a Share of Interest indirectly; the strict Property of the real Dutchman, will upon a Ballance of the whole Account, clearly stated, sink into a very unimportant Object of a National Contest, and Cause of War.

If Dutch Traders had been contented with the immense Profits of the Insurance, extending itself with every Capture, that only served to enhance the exorbitant Demands of the Insurers; if they had continued to insist upon a no less exorbitant Freightage, and avoided only the Investing the Profits of it, in a Cargo so justly liable to Confiscation, they never would have had Occasion to regret so much as they have done their own Imprudence, and the Inconveniences of that Avarice, which defeats itself.

But no good Reason surely can be assigned, why Dutch Claimants, altho' indulged ample Time and Opportunity, by the British Courts of Admiralty, have obstinately refused to

distinguish specifically, “ what Parts of the
 “ Captured Cargoes were taken from the Shore
 “ of Dutch Islands, and what were avowedly
 “ taken out of French Barks coming from
 “ the French Colonies ;” unless they have
 meant tacitly to confess that the Whole is the
 Property of the Enemies of Great-Britain ; or
 that the Properties of Dutchmen and French-
 men are become as inseparably blended, as
 their National Characters, in the American
 World, have long been equivocal.

The profuse Thanks, and Caresses, which
 have been received upon the Exchange of
 London, by the Agents for the Claimants of
 pretended Dutch Cargoes, are a Proof,
 too notorious, of the true and principal
 Points in which those Claims are centered,
 however the Circle may have extended it-
 self, and that the Subjects of Holland are by
 no means the sole and principal Proprietors
 of the Cargoes contended for.

It is natural for Men of grateful Disposi-
 tions to confess in how polite a Manner their
 own Affiduities and Services have been re-
 paid ; but it may be more agreeable to their
 Principals, that Agents should forget their
 Applauses, rather than their own Discretion.

Some very extraordinary Reasons however
 must exist, that have enhanced the Merit of
 these Commissions, beyond the merely acting
 for those Persons in Holland, who are supposed
 to be, in consequence of their Claims, the
 Owners of the Captured Cargoes.

Who-

Whoever knows the Nature of the English Courts of Judicature, or of the English Government, must know, whenever Property belonging either to Foreigners, or native Subjects of England, is depending in Litigation, that there cannot be any Merit in Agencies, farther than common Honesty, and diligent Attendance ; after having made a proper choice of Persons of Ability and Character in their Profession to solicit their Claims, and conduct their Causes.

Yet surely, no one will dare to presume, or even to insinuate, that the Agents in Dutch Claims, have not, in their respective Correspondencies abroad, informed such of their Principals, as are there, with the utmost Exactness and Impartiality, of the true State of their Causes depending here ; and how little the Success of any of them is to be attributed to their own Diligence, and Arts of Address, as Agents ; but how much to the Moderation of Captors, the Uprightness of British Judicatures, and the Attention of British Ministers.

With regard to Courts of Justice in England, it is a most amazing Instance of Neglect, and self-sufficiency in Foreigners, who often for that very Reason, give themselves much unnecessary Trouble, and no little Vexation to the British Ministers, that they take no more Pains to inform themselves of the first Principles and fundamental Laws of
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the Constitution of England, than they do to speak its Language, or read its Authors.

But Foreign Ministers who are instructed, that the common Course of Justice must take place in England, even in regard to Foreigners, cannot but revere the Equity of a Government which is formed upon so excellent a Plan; where the Contests of their own Countrymen are put upon a Level with the Rights of Native Subjects, and are left, as they themselves might wish and entreat to have them left, to the Laws of Liberty, uncontrolled by Power.

And are Dutch Merchants of all People unacquainted with the sacred Privileges of British Tribunals? which resemble the solemn Assemblies of the Amphyctyons in Antient Greece; which divided Justice to various Nations, which were equally the Resort of every contending Party, and which prevented neighbouring and friendly States from deciding the Differences of a few particular Subjects by the Vengeance of their Arms.

No one therefore surely will dare to suggest that those Gentlemen who have been commissioned to act for the Claimants in Holland have raised Spectres in order to have the Honour of laying them again, and to enhance the Value of their lucrative Commissions. It is too certain, that very formidable Spectres have been raised by some Persons

sons or other, who have it not in the Power of their Magic to make them disappear, or to prevent the Ruin which may ensue from the Storm, and from that Confusion which will involve even their own Persons and Properties.

I dare say, with regard to the mere Agents, that their Correspondents can do them the Justice to witness, that they are not the Occasion of these outrageous Clamours, by a false Representation to their Principals of either Things, or Persons; they have never exclaimed against the Proceedings of the most upright and unbiaſſed Judicatures with odious Appellations, in order to make them at the ſame Time the Eccho of their own Applauſes; they moſt ſurely have been ſtrictly impartial in diſcharging what is due to their Country, to their Principals, and themſelves, and to every Perſon with whom they have been concerned in their ſeveral Tranſactions.

Their frequent Attendance on the Courts of Marine Judicature, I may add too, their ſingular and attentive Vigilance over all their Proceedings, muſt long have enabled them to inform their Principals what theſe Courts are, and of whom compoſed; they know by what Laws their Deciſions are neceſſarily governed, and how equally ſuperior they are to the Influence of Domeſtic Miniſters, and the ineffectual Memorials of Foreign ones.

Their

Their private Acquaintance and Connections with the Advocates, and Practitioners in them, concerned alternately for either Claimants, or Captors, as with Men of Knowledge, and Honour in their Professions, many of them Persons of large Property, and independent Fortunes; these are all certainly Circumstances that could never do them Discredit with their Principals, whenever they have, no doubt, informed those Principals of that which it must give them the highest Pleasure to hear, from such good Authority. In short, they are Men of too much Penetration, not to be perfectly sensible, that mercantile Factions are utterly inconsistent with the friendly and pacific Principles of Commerce; nor certainly will they esteem it any Reflection upon themselves that they have been thought superior to a Passion habitual to a Profession which attaches the Mind to one Object only, or that they have been represented capable, as they are, of more elevated Feelings, of that universal, disinterested Benevolence which forbids to augment the Miseries of Mankind, and above all, of the Love of Truth.

If upon some Occasions there has been any Appearance of Delay, in not determining immediately, and finally, the Objects of their Commissions, the Absurdity of Owners, the Perverseness and Obstinacy of Dutch and other Neutral Masters of captured Vessels, un-

tractable as the Element with which they are conversant, these are all Reasons which cannot be unknown to Neutral Claimants, but most certainly their Agents know them to be the true and general Sources of the Delays complained of; nor have they failed apprising their Correspondents from time to time of the true Foundation of every Difficulty, and of the Lenity, Moderation, and Readiness to concede, which they have frequently met with, on the part of the Captor; at the same time they have doubtless informed them too, how liable to a Repulse must prove all those Claims which have frequently been given in, by the Order of Principals, I must say with Effrontery, on behalf of Dutch Merchants, without any Proof of Property whatever to support them, or when the Bills of Sale, and Transfers of Property, and other Documents have appeared under the strongest Colours of a fraudulent Transaction.

I presume, for many Reasons relative to the Claimants themselves, that I shall very easily be excused from instancing the particular Cases; if it should be thought necessary to produce them, the Facts are as obvious as they are numerous, and from Authorities extremely authentic.

Give me leave to add one Observation to what has been said upon the Subject of Delays, which must hold in all free Countries, and Judicatures, where contested Property is not

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determined as it is in Despotic ones, with an arbitrary, and therefore a precipitate Decision.

When every thing carries the Appearance of a fair Transaction, and there are no suspicious Subterfuges on the Part of a Claimant, nothing is so short as, or more obvious than the Determination of Property.

But when great and almost universal Collusions are known to be frequently practised, then must the judicial Proceedings be tedious, which are necessary to unravel the Entanglement of Circumstances, and to trace every Fraud thro' a Variety of Subterfuges.

However ignorant Persons complain of the Length and Burthen of judicial Forms, in all Courts of Justice, yet in themselves these Forms are conducive to excellent Purposes; they tie down the Hands of the Judge himself from arbitrary Acts, and it would be impossible to do Justice, especially in complicated Cases, unless Truth was directed to flow regularly in established Channels, that it may be with the greater Certainty investigated, and cleared of all its circumstantial Perplexities.

The Delays of Justice lay too often at the Door of the Parties themselves, who are the first to complain of its being in a Court, as if the Person who sits * there to dispense Justice was himself their Adversary.

With

* The Language of the Author of the Defence of the Dutch West-India Trade addressed to the Good People of England,

With regard to the British Ministers, they have done all that could be expected; they have done all that depended upon them, and have left the rest to the Laws of Liberty, of England, and of Nations. They have shewn at once their Justice, and their Patience, the one, in searching out, and delivering over Offenders to the civil Power, and the other, in hearing with Attention the repeated, importunate, and unreasonable Complaints of those who have forgot, that the sovereign Power itself in England is subject to the Laws.

New Negotiations, Conventions, Explanations, and other Methods of putting an end to these Contests, may be entered into between the two Nations; but till that is done, things will, and must run on in the usual, and legal Channels of Justice.

But would the Dutch Traders insist, that the British Government should entirely suppress Privateering in their Favour? Or let us suppose, even that the British Administration

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should

England, by a Merchant of Amsterdam, and published in Holland, is very unjustifiable and unbecoming. The Expressions which follow are not such as generally attend the decent Cause of Truth and Justice. "I forbear mentioning the
 " unwarrantable Sentences, Confiscations, Vexations, Briberies, false Oaths, and above all the unparalleled Expensiveness of the common Course of Law, whose very Mercies we
 " have experienced to be cruel in England; in short, the
 " Havock and Destruction which has been lately made
 " amongst our Shipping throughout the World, by those that
 " call themselves our Friends and Allies, cry to Heaven for
 " Vengeance."

should concede to them the Privilege which is contended for in its utmost Extent.

With regard to the first, Men who subscribe and venture their Fortunes to aid the Necessities of the State, deserve and receive its Favours. When that is done in the ordinary Loans, the Equipments are the Equipments of the Government; the Losses are the Losses of the Community. The Particulars who have given aid, are secure in the Public Credit, and the Faith of Parliament. But, when private Persons, commissioned by the State to make War upon its Enemies, equip and maintain, they are liable to every Loss from the Inclemency of the Winds and Seas, and the Superiority of the Enemy, while the Advantages they receive are dearly earned, at the Expence of their single Treasure; and their Blood is spilled for the general Service, without the Hopes of Honour or Advancement. Do they then deserve no Countenance? The Dread of Enemies, the Awe of Neutrals, the Support of our marine Power, by pursuing Objects unworthy the Attention of Royal Ships which are employed in other Services, shall they extend the Terror of our Arms abroad, and be discouraged and oppressed at home?

While the necessary Interests of the State require that it should strengthen its Hands on every side, and that it should resist an Enemy who uses the same Means, the Owners of

Private ships of War, must, and ought to be encouraged; nor must they be checked by too severe a Discipline, inconsistent with the Nature of independent Armaments.

Altho' it must be owned, that the Crews of Private Ships of War, like other Irregulars by Land, are subject to the same marauding Dispositions; yet it cannot be believed as a Fact universally true, that the Pilfering of Cargoes, on board of Dutch Ships, have been always the Act of English Privateers: Rewards have been offered by the British Government and Merchants, sufficient even to tempt false Accusations, in Men less honest than Dutch Skippers are supposed to be; yet it is asked, whether these plundered, stripped, and mutilated Hollanders, have appeared publickly in England to convict the Offenders, who are said to have thus violated the Law of Nations, and of their Country? We are assured that the * Notices and Admonitions of the British Minister in Holland have been ineffectual.

It would be happy for Mankind, if War could be carried on in a Manner as little destructive as possible to Society, and to the Happiness of Individuals; But the Condition of the World is such, that those Humanities are not to be expected, and are often impracticable.

Let

* Memorial presented by Major General Yorke, to the States General, Dec. 22. 1758.

Let those neutral States who complain of the Inconveniences arising from Commissions of War granted to private Persons, recall to their Memories what Nation it was that first introduced into Europe this piratic Method, as it is called, of carrying on a War, and made the Example necessary to its maritime Neighbours?

The Depredations of the Marine Partisan Guè Trouin, are celebrated by French Historians; and can the Alliance made by the French Admiral de Pointis, with the American Freebooters in his Expedition to Carthagera, and in other Parts of the West-Indies be forgotten? I say nothing of the inhuman * Manner of War practised by France
in

* Representations faites a Mr. Le Chevalier de Drucour, au Conseil de Guerre tenu a Louisburgh, le 26 Juillet, 1728. par Mr. Prevost Commissaire General de la Marine, Ordonnateur a l'Isle Royal. Amsterdam Gazette, le 14 Nov. 1758.

It cannot be supposed that the Argument used here should be sufficient to induce the General not to stand a general Assault, if the Resentment dreaded was not real; pretended Resentments are the Resentments of Politicians and not of Soldiers. And there is but too much Reason to believe, that the French Troops and Officers deserved a Return of Cruelty, which induced them not to suffer the last Extremities of a Siege, no less fatal to the innocent Inhabitants, than to themselves.

Il seront tous exposer, says M. Prevost, au sang, et au carnage, aux horreurs que peuvent commettre les Soldats effrenez, entrainez, a ces horreurs par un pretendu resentiment de ce que s'est passé en Canada.

Whoever knows the Humanity and Generosity of the English Nation, must know, that if there was no Ground for the Retaliation, there could be no Ground for the Terror of it.

in North-America, against the even disarmed Inhabitants of all Ages and Sexes ; nor of the cruel Species of Ammunition used in Engagements on board French Ships of War ; they are all too shocking Proofs of the real Barbarity of that pretended civilized, and civilizing Nation. What neutral Friends supply them with that destructive Ammunition, as well as with other necessary Stores of War, it is too well experienced.

But to consider the Subject in the View of Interest only, it cannot be doubted but that Freightage and Insurance are the great Objects of Holland in regard to the Trade which is contested.

Now suppose, for a Moment, every Concession to be made on the part of Great-Britain which Holland can desire ; where, upon a Ballance of the whole Account, would be the Difference to Holland, in point of general Advantage ?

Let the Moment when the Concession should be made, and the French Traders be convinced, that without the Covers now used of false Papers, and fraudulent Transfers, their Property would be completely protected by a Dutch Pass, and a Dutch Vessel, it would no longer be thought necessary to pay exorbitant Duties to the States of Holland for unlading and relading French Cargoes, on and off the barren Rocks of St. Eustatius and Curassao. The Freightage and Insurance

rance would sink in proportion to the Safety of the Voyage. The Remains of this advantageous Trade may suffer a still farther Diminution, and Danes, Swedes, and Spaniards may then become the next peculiar Favourites of France : who, besides supplying her Colonies with Necessaries, considers the Interest she has in embroiling every other commercial Nation in its turn with Great-Britain, as a very capital Object.*

Under the present Circumstances, the Captures made by the English enhance the Demands of the Subjects of Holland upon France to indemnify them for their Detainure and Expences, while the People of Holland in general are rather Gainers by the Captures, which, if they proceed, besides increasing to an immense Degree the Price of Freightage and Insurance, will render the Commerce of France insupportable to its Subjects, and the French Islanders will be obliged to sell their very Soil to Dutch Subjects

* According to the Writer of the Memorial or Exposition of the Case of the Dutch Ships, printed at Amsterdam, this must be the sole Object of France by a necessary Inference, if we believe him, when he says,

On fait très-bien qu'il n'importé tant à la France, si quelques denrées des Isles Françoises se vendent ou non, et qu'à la rigueur ces Isles peuvent se passer des Provisions d'Europe, p. 11. Fol. Edit. I beg leave to observe that the representing the French Colonies as above the Want of Assistance, and sufficient of themselves for the Support of their Inhabitants, is such a Mark of Vanity and national Prejudice against apparent Truths, that the Author of this boasted Memorial can be nobody but a Frenchman.

jects and other neutral Nations for Bread, and the common Necessaries of Life.

To conclude, Gentlemen, this disagreeable Subject ; Much, I am sure, will depend upon your Representations, to undeceive the Good People of Holland, whose Understandings, whether naturally prejudiced of themselves, or misguided by others, have by no means entered into the Foundation of the present Dispute.

You cannot shew a more grateful Proof of loving your Country, or of your Benevolence to Mankind, in the utmost Sincerity, than to withdraw the Curtain which has been artfully covered over the real Interests of Holland. You will prevent the Miseries of a cruel and unnatural War.

The Terms of France are captivating, no doubt, but the Friendship of Great-Britain is necessary. If Holland, but for a Moment reflects upon the impotent Condition of its Fleet and Army, and above all if it casts an Eye upon the embarrassed State of its Revenues, it cannot hesitate a Moment to comply with the just Demands of Great-Britain.

A total Separation from its Alliance, and the Junction of its few, inglorious, and long inactive Forces, and of its neglected and diminished Fleet, with the ruined Remains of the maritime Power of France, cannot injure Great-Britain more fatally than a partial and treacherous Friendship.

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Altho' the Northern States should become Parties in the Contest, yet Great-Britain can forgive the Ingratitude, and Folly, which she has often experienced; and, whenever Perfidy shall have its Hour of Completion, she will draw some Advantages from the Injuries which are done her; she will see her Enemies; and from the Blessing of Providence, and her own Magnanimity, and from the Presumptions suggested by the increasing Strength of her Navy, and the Courage of her Officers, it is to be hoped, that she will not only see her Enemies, but that she will do more, she will conquer them.

F I N I S.